THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise in view of reply to (a) above.

(c) The Government does not have any information in this regard.

Floating of bonds for unearthing black money

1540. SHRI MANOJ BHATTACHARYA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to issue a fresh series of bonds in order to unearth the black money in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) by when the proposed bonds are likely to be floated in the market?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise in view of reply to (a) above.

Rationalisation of duty structure on SSIs in Gujarat

1541. SHRI RAJU PARMAR: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that excise duty linked with Maximum Retail Price has affected the Small Scale Industry in Gujarat adversely and the State has asked for rationalization of rates and duty structure;

(b) if so, what is Government's reaction thereto; and

(c) what steps are being taken to protect the Small Scale Industry of Gujarat which is affected adversely by this duty structure?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM): (a) Chief Minister of Gujarat made a reference to the Government requesting to consider:—

(i) increase in the level of abatement from retail price from 40% to 50%, for the purpose of levy of excise duty on drugs so as to take care of the small drug manufacturers; and

(ii) reduction of excise duty from 16% to 8%.